As the father of a large family—my wife and I have nine children—I am sometimes asked why we chose to have so many children. My answer depends, to a certain extent anyway, upon my audience.

If I am speaking to a Christian, I will say that the Bible tells us that children are blessings from God. As the Psalmist says, *Children are a heritage from the Lord and the fruit of the womb is His reward.* (Psalm 127:3)

Parents, I tell them, are given the incredible opportunity to assist God in the creation of an immortal soul. The birth of a child will bind you to God more tightly than ever before, in awed gratitude.

The child that you and your spouse have been generous in accepting from God was created to return to Him, after a life of love, service, and obedience on earth, to spend eternity in Heaven. Our Lord Himself said that there was plenty of room for those returning souls. There is, of course, no overpopulation problem in Heaven!

A Christian will smile and nod at the truth of all this, and no further explanation is necessary.

Such an explanation won’t do for those outside the faith, however. We live in an anti-natal age. The secular humanists have twisted the virtue of childbearing into the vice of overpopulation. I have actually been attacked by secular humanists for having too many little “blessings.”

So what would I say to those who do not yet believe?
To a young woman who is in a crisis pregnancy I would say this: You will experience no joy like the joy of welcoming a child into your life. You will marvel anew at how perfectly formed your little one is, and over how quickly you will fall head over heels in love with him. You will be enchanted with every tiny aspect of her appearance. The color of her hair, the shape of her nose, and the winsomeness of her smile will delight you. It will be the most miraculous thing that has ever happened in your life.

And as you get older your children will care for you, I would explain. People who have children don’t have to rely upon strangers to care for them in their old age. Children will also become the parents of your grandchildren. Grandchildren bring joy, happiness, and laughter, while still allowing you to get a good night’s sleep!

Finally, what would I say to those who want to end abortion?

When Mother Teresa of Calcutta was asked by a young mother about the best way to proceed with prolife work, she responded emphatically, “Have a big family, that is the best way to end abortion!”

How this works is not difficult to understand. As children become more rare due to contraception, sterilization and abortion, whole segments of society become less and less familiar with the sense of joy and hope that only babies and children can give. In this climate, contraception and abortion feeds on itself, as the increasingly selfish few further reduce their number.

By having another child, you demonstrate once again to the world that children are God’s greatest gifts. “Children build up the life of the family and society,” as Saint John Paul has said. “The child becomes a gift to its brothers and sisters, parents and entire family. Its entire life becomes a gift for the very people who were givers of life and who cannot help but feel its presence, its sharing in their life and its contribution to the common good and to the community of the family.”

The more children there are in society, the more pro-life that society will become, and the easier it will be for the great evil of abortion to be eradicated once and for all. And that is our goal.
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